

## **“W” and “Lightning Bolt” Symbols on the 7-Day Outlook: High Risk Days**

High Risk Days are rare occasions when conditions exist that historically have a significantly higher than normal chance for a new large fire or for significant growth on existing fires. *On the average, days in this category have about a 20% or better chance of large fire occurrence.* There are two controlling factors for a High Risk Day: Critical Burn Environment and Ignition Triggers.

- **Critical Burn Environment** (orange) - A Critical Burn Environment results when a combination of sufficiently dry fuels and critical weather conditions are expected. Examples of critical weather conditions are high winds, low humidity, an unstable atmosphere and very hot weather. An large orange “W” symbol will be used representing the weather condition responsible for the critical burn environment.
- **Ignition Triggers** (red) - Unlike the burn environment which merely promotes or inhibits fire growth should a fire occur, an Ignition Trigger actually starts fires. A lightning outbreak is the most common Ignition Trigger, but others are possible depending on the geographic area (e.g. strong winds in areas that experience Santa Ana's). A red lightning bolt symbol will be used representing the Ignition Trigger.

The final determination of whether to post a “High Risk Day” colored box on the 7-Day Outlook concerns resource availability. When enough fires occur within a geographic area, Initial Attack resources can be overwhelmed, leading to an elevated chance of large fires. Also, sending resources to fires in other geographic areas will increase the probability of large fire occurrence in our home GACC, since our ability to respond quickly to new ignitions is impaired. With a lack of Initial Attack resources, even a marginal weather event can trigger a “High Risk Day” designation.